



كلية الآداب والعلوم
College of Arts and Sciences
QATAR UNIVERSITY جامعة قطر

مركز دراسات الخليج
Gulf Studies Center



The College of Arts and Sciences is pleased to invite you to attend a joint workshop with the Gulf Studies Center at Qatar University and Konrad Adenauer Stiftung titled:

The Gulf and the European Union: Navigating Shifting Sands

30 April – 1 May 2023

9:30 am – 4:30 pm (Qatar Time)

Qatar University, Research Complex (H10), Auditorium



Workshop Agenda

The Gulf and the European Union: Navigating Shifting Sands

Rationale:

The European Union has always had a very particular relationship with the countries belonging to the Gulf region, including Iran, Iraq, and the six GCC states. The EU's energy dependency from external sources, as well as the Union being a recipient of an immense amount of investments from the GCC states, combined with the different diplomatic approach that the EU has had with Iran in comparison with the United States, made the positioning of the 27 EU countries sometimes difficult to agree, justify or sustain. This has been the case, most clearly, since the Arab Spring, with the EU recognizing and supporting the GCC involvement in different scenarios. It was also the case with the EU's essential role in the JCPOA signed with Iran in contraposition with the Trump administration.

The war that started with the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 is perceived by the U.S. and EU as a defining moment just like 9/11 when the world was divided between either “you are with us or against us” while the Gulf states consider it a competition over power between great powers. It also provoked a diversity of consequences within the Gulf region. Qatar, for example, was approached to replace the Russian gas supply, and Saudi Arabia was attacked for seeking to maintain the oil prices high by supporting the Opec+ decision to decrease the oil supply to the market. Still, also criticism has been expressed due to the lack of condemnation of the invasion by the GCC. A more decisive rejection was expressed of the Iranian pro-Russian stand in the conflict.

The Russian war on Ukraine is also compounded with structural factors that force the EU and GCC countries to rethink their relations. On the one hand, for long, the EU considered the U.S. the guarantor for the Gulf states' security offering no alternatives, but the lack of commitment of the U.S. to the Gulf region's security since it became an oil exporter is felt in Riyadh on many occasions. On the other hand, the Gulf States economic interests are becoming increasingly linked to their trade relations with East Asian countries, mainly China, a country that is perceived as a rival to the U.S. and EU.

The shifting sands that the war is generating combined with the structural changes in the Gulf relations and interests are conditioning the future of the EU engagement with the Gulf region at all levels, economic, political, and diplomatic. This workshop is trying to analyze to what extent these changes will reshape the relationship between the EU, Iran, and the GCC temporarily or permanently. The workshop will consist of five panels, covering five areas: The GCC-EU political relations; The EU-GCC energy relations; The EU and Iran beyond the nuclear deal; China and GCC relations and their impact on the EU; and the EU and the future of the security framework architecture in the Gulf region.

PROGRAM

Day 1- Sunday, 30 April 2023

9:00 - 9:30 Welcoming participants and opening speeches

Prof. Mahjoob Zweiri

Director of the Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University

Mr. Alexander Radwan (CSU)

Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, German Bundestag

9:30 - 11:00 Panel 1: Prospect and challenges in EU-GCC political relations

Moderator:

Dr. Ali Bakir, Research Assistant Professor, Ibn Khaldon Center, Qatar University

Speakers:

- ***Why the GCC states are taking a different position than the EU from the war in Ukraine? What are the implications on the EU-GCC relations?***

Dr. Asaad Al-Shamlan

Head of the European Department at Prince Faisal Center for Diplomatic Institute, Saudi Arabia

- ***In the wake of the war in Ukraine, the US declared Qatar as a non-NATO major ally. What does it mean for Qatar's relations with NATO members in Europe? How would this decision affect Russo-Qatari relations?***

Prof. Gerd Nonneman

Professor of International Relations and Gulf Studies, Georgetown University in Qatar

- ***Did FIFA 2022 contribute to bridging or widening the gap with the EU regarding Human Rights and freedom of expression?***

Dr. Sebastian Sons

Senior Research Fellow at CARPO, Germany

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 - 13.00 Panel 2: GCC-EU relations with China and the implications on their bilateral relations

Moderator:

Dr. Mohammad Yaghi, Research Fellow and Program Manager, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Jordan

Speakers:

- ***An assessment of GCC-China relations and its implications on GCC-US relations***

Dr. Abdullah Baabood

Chair of the State of Qatar for Islamic Area Studies, Waseda University, Japan.

- ***An Assessment of EU-China relations and its implications on EU-U.S. relations***

Dr. Heiko Herold

Konrad Adenauer Foundation's Shanghai office

- ***How the GCC-EU Relations with China affect their bilateral relations***

Prof. Saban Kardas

Research Professor, Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 -15:30 Panel 3: Iran and the EU: Implications for the GCC monarchies

Moderator:

Dr. Luciano Zaccara, Research Associate Professor, Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University

Speakers:

- ***Considering Iran's position from the war in Ukraine, how will this affect the EU position from the nuclear deal?***
Dr. Rouzbeh Parsi
Head of the Middle East and North Africa Programme, Lund University, Sweden
- ***What do the Gulf States expect from the EU when it comes to Iran?***
Dr. Shareefa Al-Adwani
Assistant Professor of Political Science and Chair of the Departments of International Relations and Social and Behavioral Sciences, American University of Kuwait
- ***How will the EU address the Gulf States' concern regarding Iran's real or perceived threat to their security?***
Dr. Guido Steinberg
Senior Researcher, German Institute for International and Security Affairs, Germany

15:30 -16:00 Coffee Break

16:00 – 17.30 Panel 4: Energy cooperation dynamics between EU and the Gulf States

Moderator:

Dr. Nikolay Kozhanov, Research Associate Professor, Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University

Speakers:

- ***The EU strategy to replace the Russian gas and its implications on the EU-GCC relations***
Dr. Steven Wright
Associate Professor of International Relations and Associate Dean for Student Affairs at Hamad bin Khalifa University, Qatar
- ***Green energy transition and climate change cooperation between the EU and the GCC***
Dr. Aisha Al-Sarihi
Research Fellow at the National University of Singapore
- ***Many EU countries (Germany-Italy) have started to negotiate with Qatar over LNG shipment to Europe to decrease dependency on Russian oil. Is Qatar capable of such a shift? Is it economically and politically preferable for Doha?***
TBC

Day 2 – Monday, 1 May 2023

8:45 - 9:30 Keynote Speech: Qatar EU Relations. A driving force in a turbulent world

H.E. Dr. Majed Mohammed Al-Ansari, Adviser to the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and Spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Moderator:

Prof. Mahjoob Zweiri, Director of the Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University

9:30 - 11:00 Panel 5: EU-Gulf security relation in a turbulent geo-political context

Moderator:

Prof. Bulent Aras, Center for International Policy Research & Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University

Speakers:

- ***The Gulf region security: A European perspective***
Dr. Dorothee Schmid
Director of the MENA programme at the French Institute of International Relations
- ***What does a new security framework architecture mean for the GCC?***
Dr. Hesham Alghannam
Independent Political Analyst, Saudi Arabia
- ***The Gulf region, energy security and the world economy: Are the world's great powers heading towards cooperation or competition in this region? An European assessment***
Prof. Eckart Woertz
Director of GIGA Institute for Middle East Studies, Germany

11:00 - 11:30 Coffee Break

11:30 -13:00 Round table: The future of EU-GCC partnership

Moderator:

Dr. Aisha Al Rashdi, International Affairs Department, Qatar University

Speakers:

- **H.E. Dr. Claudius Fischbach**
Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to the State of Qatar
- **H.E. Cristian Tudor**
Ambassador of the European Union to the State of Qatar
- **H.E. Paolo Toschi**
Ambassador of Italy to the State of Qatar

13:00 - 13:45 Conclusions

- **Prof. Mahjoob Zweiri**
Director of the Gulf Studies Center, Doha, Qatar.
- **Mr. Philipp Dienstbier**
Director of Regional Program Gulf States, Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung, Jordan.

14:00 – 15:00 Lunch and end of the workshop

Organizers

GSC:

Prof. Mahjoob Zweiri
Director

Dr. Luciano Zaccara
Research Associate Professor

Ms. Nesibe Hicret Battaloglu
Research Assistant

Ms. Nourhan Bulble
Administrative Coordinator

KAS:

Mr. Philipp Dienstbier
Director of Regional Program Gulf States

Dr. Mohammad Yaghi
Research Fellow and Program Manager

Ms. Duaa' Al-Abdallat
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